

OKLAHOMA ADVISORY COUNCIL ON INDIAN EDUCATION  
(70 o.s. § 3-173 (OSCN 2010), Oklahoma Advisory Council on Indian Education Act)  
ANNUAL REPORT 2015

December 17, 2015

The Oklahoma Advisory Council on Indian Education (OACIE) has recently completed their meetings for the calendar year ending 2015. This report will cover the annual report and the recommendations to the State Board of Education and the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

**Current members**

Current members for the OACIE are as follows: Members representing tribes as appointed by the Governor's office – Dr. Wayne Johnson, Muscogee (Creek) Nation; Ms. Lori Hamilton, Chickasaw Nation; Ms. Lisa John, Chickasaw Nation; Jana Roth, Delaware Tribe; and David Walkingstick, Cherokee Nation; Members representing Tribal Education Departments as appointed by the Governor's office – Ms. Mary McCormick, Sac & Fox Nation; Mr. Jim Parrish, (Chair 2015), Choctaw Nation; Mrs. Judy Davis, Miami Tribe; and Rhonda Hayworth, Ottawa Tribe; Member representing the Oklahoma Council for Indian Education as appointed by the Governor's office – Ms. Lucyann Harjo (Vice Chair 2015), Coordinator of Indian Education, Norman Public Schools; Members representing statewide teacher organizations, Ms. Esther Bell, Shawnee, OK; Mr. Paul Pinkerton, Stillwell, OK; Member representing Oklahoma Tribal Colleges, President Robert Bible, College of the Muscogee Nation; Member representing the Native American Cultural & Education Authority, Nancy Fields; Member representing the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology, Dr. Joe Robinson; Member representing the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, Matt Higdon, Field Coordinator for Student Preparation; and representing the State Department of Education, Dwight Pickering, Director of American Indian Education.

As of November 18, 2015, the OACIE has not received word from Governor Mary Fallin's office on the appointment to the Council to replace Tom Crimmins, Superintendent of Elgin Public Schools who resigned. The appointment of a member representing statewide organization for school superintendents is vacant.

**Purpose**

The purpose of the Oklahoma Advisory Council on Indian Education Act is to recognize the unique relationship that Oklahoma enjoys with the Indian tribes located within the state and how Native Americans and Indian tribes play a pivotal role in the educational system of the state in light of this special relationship. The act established the Oklahoma Advisory Council on Indian Education. The purpose of creating the Council is to promote culturally relevant learning environments, educational opportunities and instructional material for Native American students enrolled in the public schools of the state. Because of the number of Native American students enrolled in public schools in Oklahoma, this objective positively affects the educational success of all public school students and encourages further government-to-government cooperation between the State of Oklahoma and the sovereign Indian Tribes in Oklahoma.

## **Highlights of 2015**

### **1. Presentations from the State Department of Education**

Dwight Pickering, Director of American Indian Education, presented updates from the State Department of Education on Indian Education at each meeting. The following topics of his presentations are highlights for 2015:

1. Bureau of Indian Education Line Office, Oklahoma City  
Mr. Pickering updated the Council each meeting on updates on the Bureau of Indian Education's Reorganization Plans and its impact on Oklahoma's BIE Schools and Johnson O'Malley Programs. Oklahoma has the second largest number of JOM Programs in the nation that provide services to Indian children through Johnson O'Malley in our schools. Superintendent Hofmeister has been in support of our JOM Programs in the state and has addressed this with a letter of support. Oklahoma will now be the site of a National JOM Office.
2. Oklahoma Indian Education Resource Website  
Mr. Pickering updated the Council each meeting about the website updates. The teacher resources website on the Tribes of Oklahoma was launched in July 2014. The website committee has developed procedures and protocol as well as establishing a Review Committee to review and approve new information for the website. The 39 tribal seals, new teacher resources and the digitizing of the Four Circles of Learning curriculum produced by the OSDE in 1991 were the committee's focus this year.
3. Indian Education Summit  
Mr. Pickering invited and updated the Council on this year's Annual Oklahoma Indian Education Summit. The Summit was held in Norman on June 29-30, 2015. Approximately 200 participants attended the Summit. The 2016 Summit has been tentatively set for June of next summer.
4. EngageOK Conference, July 7-9, 2015  
Mr. Pickering invited and updated the Council on OSDE's annual summer education event. The focus from the Office of American Indian Education in this year's conference was presenting the partnerships and resources available to teachers from the Oklahoma History Center, the Comanche National Museum and Cultural Center, the Chickasaw Cultural Center, the Cherokee Heritage Center and the Oklahoma Indian Education Resource website.
5. Academic Performance of Native American children in Oklahoma  
The Council reviewed the results for Native American children from the 2015 OCCT Reading scores for 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade and the 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading National Assessment of Education Progress results.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> grade OCCT test scores found:

- 2% of Native students scored Advanced compared to 2.5% for all,
- 68% scored Proficient compared to 66.4% for all,
- 17% scored Limited Knowledge compared to a 15.8% for all,
- 13% scored Unsatisfactory compared to 14.5% for all.

The 4<sup>th</sup> grade National Assessment of Education Progress results found that our Native American students in Oklahoma scored higher than their national counterparts. The National Norm for all 4<sup>th</sup> graders in the nation is 232 and for Native American students in the nation, it is 206, a gap of 26. For Oklahoma 4<sup>th</sup> graders, NAEP score results show the Oklahoma Norm is 226 and for Native American students 223, a gap of 3.

Comparison of 4<sup>th</sup> Grade NAEP Reading Scores to Other Native Students in other states

- Oklahoma        223
- WC                207
- North Dakota   204
- Wyoming        204
- Montana         199

6. Native Language

Nine tribes are teaching their language in our public schools for high school graduation credit and two other tribes using adjunct instructors. We have one immersion school

7. State Tribal Education Partnerships (STEP) Grant updates were presented by Dwight Pickering at each meeting. Oklahoma has 2 STEP Grant awardees in 2015: The Chickasaw Nation and The Muscogee (Creek) Nation.

## **2. Presentations by OACIE Board Members**

- a. Dr. Wayne Johnson, Muscogee (Creek) Nation, presented to the Council updates on the most recent business of the National Advisory Council on Indian Education (NACIE), the Tribal Education Departments National Assembly (TEDNA) and the National Johnson O'Malley Organization.
- b. Lucyann Harjo presented to the Council updates from the Oklahoma Council for Indian Education (OCIE).
- c. Tom Crimmins presented to the Council updates on current legislative issues.
- d. Matt Higdon presented to the Council updates from the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. OSRHE highlights in 2015 include: continual efforts of assisting students and families with college readiness at school and parent events, creating a network of resources and best practices for Indian educators thru the Indian Education Retreats and the inclusion of a panel of Indian educators at the counselor's retreat.

### **3. Presentations by Guest Speakers**

- a. Oklahoma Native American Juvenile Justice Task Force presented to the Council an interim study on the overrepresentation of Native American children in our state's Juvenile Justice system.
- b. Oklahoma Teacher Connection (OSRHE) Program presented to the Council. Oklahoma Teacher Connection is a program that promotes early recruitment of minority teachers.

### **4. Activities of the OACIE**

- a. A meet and greet session was held by the Council at the State Capitol on April 8, 2015 for the purpose of meeting the members of the Native American Caucus, other members of the legislature and to press forward issues affecting Native American children in Oklahoma.
- b. Several members were active in the passing of HB 1034 and HB 1834. HB 1034 on Charter Schools was passed and signed by Governor Fallin. HB 1034 amends the Oklahoma Charter Schools Act, permitting Oklahoma tribes to sponsor a charter school within their tribal boundaries. HB 1834 mandates that the Office of Juvenile Affairs or County Juvenile Bureau inquire if a juvenile is of American Indian lineage and if so, notify the primary tribe or nation of membership within 3 days of completing an intake of a juvenile. It is the hope to preserve and protect Native American juvenile rights through communication and sharing of resources (state and tribal) to meet the needs of Native American youth in the juvenile justice system in Oklahoma with collaborative efforts between tribal, federal, state, and county agencies.

### **5. OACIE Partners in Indian Education**

American Indian Institute, University of Oklahoma

Native American Caucus of Oklahoma Legislators

Native American Liaison from the Office of Governor Mary Fallin (Brian Hendrix, Deputy Assistant of Native American Affairs for Secretary Chris Benge)

National Advisory Council on Indian Education

Oklahoma Council for Indian Education

Oklahoma Education Television Authority (OETA)

Oklahoma Historical Society

Oklahoma History Center

Oklahoma Native American Juvenile Justice Task Force

South Central Comprehensive Center, University of Oklahoma

## **6. Recommendations to the State Board of Education**

- a. The Council once again recommends to the State Department of Education to add funding to increase 6 new positions to the Indian Education Department in order to broaden the support of districts and schools in the implementation of the Title VII Program and Johnson O'Malley Program.
- b. The Council also recommends the continual support of the SDE in the provision of additional staff development opportunities for teachers and schools on the cultural diversity of our Native American students.
- c. The Council requests the collaboration between the State Department of Education and Tribes to continue to promote progress in building effective partnerships for the betterment of the American Indian students of Oklahoma and efficient use of our collective resources.
- d. The Council request for the State Department of Education and Tribes to work together to improve the graduation rates of American Indian students in Oklahoma.
- e. The Council requests for the State Department of Education to promote the inclusion of culturally related materials into the State Academic Standards and include more Native American history in our curriculum.

### **It is the Council's charge and duty to continue to:**

- 1. Identify strategies for developing an efficient and reliable process of communications between Oklahoma education entities, educators, tribal organizations and other interested parties;
- 2. Identify and disseminate research-based, measurable criteria, both behavioral and academic, by which the success and efficacy of the education offered to Native American students in Oklahoma may be measured;
- 3. Analyze data to ensure that education agencies in Oklahoma continue to address the education needs of Native American students;
- 4. Encourage and promote Native American educational leadership at all levels of the education system; and

5. Make recommendations to the State Board of Education for programs that will help achieve the purposes of the Oklahoma Advisory Council on Indian Education Act.

If you have any questions, contact me, Lucyann Harjo, Coordinator of Indian Education for Norman Public Schools, at 405-366-5809, or at [lharjo2@norman.k12.ok.us](mailto:lharjo2@norman.k12.ok.us).

Lucyann Harjo, Chairman of the Oklahoma Advisory Council on Indian Education